Join our Bring History to Life Campaign!

Southern Oregon STORIES

People, Places, and Events That Shape the Past, Present, and Future of Southern Oregon

SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2010
It’s not unusual for a history museum director to be asked, “Why does history matter?” After all, time is always moving forward, and technology is changing so quickly that the past seems even more distant now than when I first began working in this field.

My belief is that when people ask whether history matters, what they are really saying is that they personally do not have a connection to local history. This is exactly the role we want to fill at the Southern Oregon Historical Society—we want to build your connection to local history by letting you participate in strengthening the future of SOHS.

Just look at the success of our Research Library, which is being operated almost solely by volunteers (more than thirty in number). What better way to connect with your community’s past than by actively participating in one of our key functions—providing access to our stellar archival collection of primary source documents and photos.

Similarly, we are going to ask for your help in creating traveling exhibits. We know you want to see more of our collection, but rather than just take exhibits on the road, we are going to be hosting meetings in communities throughout the region so we can hear what topics are of the most importance to you, giving you the opportunity to contribute to the content of the exhibits. We want to hear your personal stories, see the objects you most cherish, and work hand in hand with your community to create exhibits that tell firsthand accounts of life in southern Oregon.

These are just a few of the programs we are working on this year. You have been very patient as we recreate the historical society. I’d like to invite you to take a more active role by getting involved in any of the exciting projects highlighted in this magazine. Hope to see you this year!

Ali Weiss
Executive Director

Tom Pyle
Board President

Southern Oregon STORIES

People, Places, and Events That Shape the Past, Present, and Future of Southern Oregon

Cover: With the introduction of the railroad in 1887, Ashland became a major division point on the north-south portion of the transcontinental railroad between Portland and San Francisco. The town grew dramatically as a result, adding side tracks, a round house, a repair shop, an eating station, and sheds. This photo shows the recently reconstructed left side of the plaza, which had burned down in 1879 (SOHS #79A).
Southern Oregon Stories

Bring History to LIFE!

“Don’t forget your history nor your destiny.”
—Bob Marley

These words reflect the reason the Southern Oregon Historical Society exists and eloquently summarize what we do: preserve the past, chronicle the present, and bring these stories to life for future generations.

From the scholar who reads Peter Britt’s diary in our archives to the child who takes a horse-drawn wagon ride at Hanley Farm, the Historical Society presents history to the community in unique and imaginative ways that cannot be experienced elsewhere.

To fund the exciting new programs you will read about in this magazine, the Southern Oregon Historical Society has launched Bring History to Life, a major campaign inviting individuals, families, and businesses to make generous contributions that will help guarantee the financial stability of the organization. Our goal is to raise $100,000 for each of the next three years. As of October 1, 2010, supporters have already made gifts totaling $40,000 toward the current 2010–2011 $100,000 goal.

Throughout this publication, you will read about the initiatives SOHS is undertaking—all with input from the community. We are listening to our members and supporters and are rebuilding SOHS to better respond to your needs. We are using our valuable resources more efficiently, making effective use of partnerships, and creatively reinventing SOHS for the twenty-first century.

We invite you to shape the destiny of both the Historical Society and southern Oregon by joining the Bring History to Life campaign this fall. A three-year pledge to the Bring History to Life campaign will help fulfill the dreams of the SOHS founders. You will ensure the Southern Oregon Historical Society will continue telling the stories about the people, places, and events that shape the past, present, and future of southern Oregon. The success of this campaign will ensure a strong and vibrant Southern Oregon Historical Society.

Thank you,
April Sevcik
Chair, Development Committee

Bring History to Life!
Thank you to a grant from the Carpenter Foundation, SOHS and ScienceWorks have partnered to create Hanley Farm Science Adventure, a science-based educational program that explores the importance of soil in a historical context. This is now a popular elementary school field trip.

Hanley Farm

SOHS is entering into a new business partnership with an organic farm that will be leasing seven acres of land at Hanley Farm. The Farm boasts some of the best soil in the Rogue Valley. This is an exciting development for SOHS that will help make the farm financially sustainable and allow us to use our resources in the best possible way.

Tractor ride at Hanley Farm

Hanley House (SOHS #9473)

PROGRESS

As It Was

Each month, more than a dozen volunteer writers dig into regional history, searching for stories to contribute to the popular As It Was broadcast series, a co-production of the Southern Oregon Historical Society and Jefferson Public Radio (JPR) since 1992.

The writers, who live in southern Oregon and northern California, send their stories to Kernan Turner, who coordinates and edits a package of up to twenty-three original stories a month, enough for a fresh episode every Monday through Friday. Since 2004, the familiar voice of veteran actress Shirley Patton has narrated some 3,500 stories recorded by broadcast engineer-producer Raymond Scully at the JPR studios on the Southern Oregon University campus. Kernan has been volunteering as the project coordinator since 2007.

As It Was

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Shirley Patton

© David Gibb Photography

Britt Dig

Britt greenhouse with Jacksonville in the distance. The Peter Britt home hillside is now the current site of Britt Festivals. The original house burned to the ground in the late 1960s. Photo by Peter Britt (SOHS #20603).

In celebration of Jacksonville’s 150th anniversary, the Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) conducted an open-site dig at the Peter Britt homestead. SOHS volunteers assisted with research and excavation during the weekend public archaeology event. The team discovered numerous artifacts associated with the earliest use of the Britt House in the 1850s, including elaborately decorated tobacco pipes, ceramic plates, bottles, and a nineteenth-century daguerreotype picture frame. The previously unknown location of the Ivy House, one of the outbuildings, was also identified.

An early Rogue Valley settler, Britt is best known for his photography and agricultural innovations, which helped spur southern Oregon’s wine and pear industries.

Update on the Children’s Museum

We are in the early stages of planning the relocation of the Jacksonville Children’s Museum exhibits to the History Center in Medford. Kid Time! Discovery Experience may be jointly operating this space, where exhibits and activities will encourage learning and curiosity about the community as children connect the past with the present and future. To get involved in this exciting project, contact SOHS at 541.773.6536, ext. 1005 or call Kid Time! at 541.772.9922.
History: Made by You

Exhibits Hit the Road

To get more of our collection out of storage and in front of the public, we are embarking on an ambitious traveling exhibit program. This involves two major components: 1) hosting community forums at which the public will be asked to play a part in the development of the exhibits; and (2) designing and building the modular units that will house the traveling exhibits.

The premise behind this is to involve the community in the creation of the exhibits—choosing the topics, selecting the artifacts, helping to write the text, and deciding where the exhibits will be installed. In January, we will be announcing the dates and locations for community forums. We invite everyone to participate in documenting and presenting history. Be a part of history—it’s your story!

We are several months into the design and building of the modular units for traveling exhibits. These flexible units are designed to hold objects as large as a motorcycle and as small as a display of saltshakers, and they can be easily assembled and moved around.

Want to sponsor or host an exhibit? Please contact Allison Weiss at 541.773.6536, ext. 1005 or director@sohs.org. Many thanks to the Oregon Cultural Trust for helping to fund the development stage of this project!

The Victorian Hostess
A workshop led by Ann Wilton
When: November 13, 2010, 2–4 pm
Where: Hanley Farm House
Registration Fee: $25


Health & Beauty AIDS of the 1800s
When: December 11, 2010, 1–3 pm
Where: The History Center in Medford
Registration Fee: $25

What if you had to make your soaps, beauty aids, and medicines at home? Learn about some of the practical and downright odd folkways of stocking your medicine and beauty chest by making a few yourself. Guaranteed to make unique holiday gifts!

For more information or to register for the above programs, please contact our Education Department at 541.773.6536, ext. 1003.

Holidays at Hanley House
When: December 11 and 18, 2010, from 1 to 4 pm
Where: Hanley House

Visit the Hanley House while it is decked out in its holiday finery! Enjoy hot drinks and homemade desserts, purchase a beautiful tree, and pursue the gift shop for unique items like Hanley Horsepower Flour, which includes an assortment of recipe cards from the Hanley family’s personal collection.
A week ago to-day my Fred, my love came to spend a few days in old Jacksonville; ah has it only been a week but we didn't care as we went for pleasure, and had it; the boys had revolvers and we practiced shooting; was dreadfully sleepy and dusty when we arrived home, quarreled over the back seat then was sorry we took it.

December 29, 1893

Another Christmas almost gone, had dinner at home. I played waiter and oh the dishes I had to wash, fortunately Kate came in time to dry them for me. Mamma had taken Grandma home and Effie had gone with the children. Kate stayed until after five, then it began to rain oh so hard I took Kate to the post office in the buggy we went first to visit Effie's Christmas tree. It did not seem very much like Christmas to me. The papers that night informed the public I was to be married unexpectedly. I suppose the people there thought we were good ones but we didn't care as we went for pleasure, and had it; the boys had revolvers and we practiced shooting; was dreadfully sleepy and dusty when we arrived home, quarreled over the back seat then was sorry we took it.

Ann Bybee (née Walker). William Bybee (1830–1908) was married to Elizabeth Walker that same year. Elizabeth Walker moved from Missouri with her parents. The following year, William headed north through Jacksonville to Sauvie Island. He returned in 1854 to Jacksonville, where he battled the Indians under the command of Captain Jesse Walker, Elizabeth’s father. William and Elizabeth wed that same year.

Active in politics, William served as sheriff for two terms beginning in 1878. He was engaged in stock farming and had extensive land holdings in Jackson County.

In 1890, William and Elizabeth’s daughter Minnie Ida Bybee, age nineteen, was attending school at St. Mary’s Academy in Portland. On January 23, 1893, she married Mr. Fred Luy. Below are excerpts from her diary dated August 8, 1892.

**Bybee’s Historic Inn**

An example of Classical Revival architecture, the William Bybee House (now Bybee’s Historic Inn) was on the Oregon and California Railroad line. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Bybee’s Historic Inn is located on Old Stage Road in the Historic Corridor of Jackson County (SOHS # 85A).
Medford Celebrates 125 Years

Medford Post Office and Hamlin Building in 1886, three years after the railroad came and the town was platted (SOHS #955).

Sewer being laid in the alley behind Main Street, Medford, 1899. Taken from South Central. Frame building in foreground stands on the site of the present Craterian Theatre (SOHS #5887).

Above: A group of men playing marbles at the corner of Main and Central, 1888. Behind them is Empire House, Medford’s first hotel. Sitting in the Newton wagon is D.T. Lawton, whose recollections were featured in the Medford News on January 5, 1934 (SOHS #932).
The Valley’s First Preacher

An ordained Gospel minister from Pennsylvania, Moses Allen Williams came to the Rogue Valley in 1857 after sailing around the horn and serving a three-year mission in Chile. He moved his family to the Valley and dedicated his life to conducting marriages, funerals, and sermons and providing religious counsel to the people of southern Oregon for over forty years. Reverend Williams kept a daily diary from January 1852 until he died in December 1897. These excerpts from 1883 to 1887 focus on the construction of the railroad through the Cow Creek Tunnel, which passed through his little farm, located about a mile south of what would later become the city of Medford.

The original spelling and punctuation have been copied verbatim as closely as possible.

**July 24, 1883**

Morning work, studied sermon a little while, Greek Testament, read papers. Charles Hinte came and we both went to stake off the new lines for the fences, so as to meet the changes which the railroad makes through our farms. Henry Stancliffe came down from Phoenix just as we were beginning and helped till we finished. Then we repainted the troughs as we were beginning and helped till we finished.

**August 4, 1883**

I visited the Railroad people at work on the great tunnel, took a good look at both sides, north and south. They are pushing the work with great vigor. The south end is 60 feet lower than the north end, with a grade of 2 feet to the hundred. Returned to Mr. Dunn’s and staid all night. Family worship with sacred music.

**September 8, 1883**

Went with Mr. Volk, Engineer, on the construction train through the Cow Creek Tunnel, and spent some two hours looking at the heavy work on the tunnel and its approaches. It is a grand work. Returned with Mr. Volk to Mr. Smith’s, got my mare Minnie and returned to Mr. Lauterman’s.

**October 22, 1883**

After breakfast and family worship I started for Gold Hill to see the Railroad men at work blasting rocks, etc. A number of blasts were discharged while I was not very far off. Followed down on the river and looked at the main span of the bridge just about completed.

**November 23, 1883**

... took some apples to the Chinamen on the Railroad. I poured them on the ground in their midst, and there was a great scrambling after them. Returned and studied further, then read papers. After my dinner I walked out to the Railroad track where the teams were at work near my gate and talked to the Overseer and the men. I gave a few apples to the Overseer, Mr. Stone from Illinois.

**November 24, 1883**

... walked up the track as far as Van Dyke’s field, where the work is very heavy. Called at Mr. Van Dyke’s and Mr. Van Dyke gave me a piece of apple pie. On my return, it being dinner time, she gave me another piece with some milk, which I relished much.

**November 25, 1883**

Walked out to the Railroad for exercise and talked with a Mr. Haney, Overseer. . . . Mr. William N. Hill and Mrs. Frances E. Garrett came and were united by marriage. Lord bless this union. Evening work, studied further.

**December 4, 1883**

Preach next Sabbath the funeral sermon of Mrs. Willetts, who died lately, which I consented to do. Then after they left I took a list of apples on my shoulder and went to the Chinamen in Mr. Knothammer’s field, and one of them, seeing me coming, came to meet me and carried the apples a short distance.
Southern Oregon Stories

The Railroad Arrives

Irish and Chinese workers pass in front of a work train for the Siskiyou Mountains in 1887. More than 100 workers were needed to gravel and maintain the road bed (SOSD #1216).

Excerpts from the Ashland Daily Tidings. The original spelling and punctuation have been copied verbatim as closely as possible.

December 2, 1887

The END OF THE TRACK was at Null creek yesterday, about six miles from Ashland. Progress in track laying has been delayed by the loss of the engine, which ran away and jumped off a high grade on the southern slope of the Siskiyou last Saturday. Ashland cannot be reached by the 5th, as was anticipated last week.

The rise of the snow crowned Ashland Range from the location for the railroad eating house at Ashland is superb, and will attract universal attention and admiration from the thousands who will pause here to regale in the inner man.

The people of Oregon and California are in high expectation of the railroad coming through their respective states; and when it reaches the line of their boundary it will cause an immense excitement to be experienced on both sides.

Yesterday morning Chief Engineer Grundahl, of the O. & C. R. R., came out from Portland to make the survey and location of the buildings, ties, tracks, etc., required for the eating station, repair shops, round house and sheds.

Wells, Fargo & Co. also will make Ashland a division end in the operation of their express business. All this means a material increase in the population of Ashland as a direct result, and the indirect benefit to be derived in the importance given to the place and the assurance of its rapid advancement is of yet greater moment. It has been generally understood that the eating station and repair shops would be here, but, of course, it is matter for oblivion that all doubt or uncertainty is to be set at rest now by the actual erection of the required buildings, and the preparation at once for the operating needs of the road. Ashland is the end of the Oregon & California road, which will be operated as a separate division, at least, from the California & Oregon. It is nearly equi-distant from Portland and San Francisco, and will become widely known as the half-way city between the metropolis of California and that of Oregon. The railroad company owns here a large area of land suitable for their own use and a surplusage for sale at town property. Numbers along the line of the railroad will the traveler see a picturesque location for a town than Ashland. In this brief summary of her good points and good fortune, Ashland certainly has occasion for self-gratulation and bright hopes for the future.

Concerning the Celebration, a dispatch of Friday from San Francisco to the Oregonian says: “An opinion is expressed by the Portland papers that arrangements should be made to have a portion of the programme celebrated in Portland. It is believed from all that can be learned of the fact that a grand celebration from San Francisco to Portland and return will form a conspicuous feature of the celebration. A special train, it is understood, will be provided by the railroad company, and merchants and railroad officials will travel to Portland. An Oregon delegation of citizens will return with them, and all the way down receptions will be given to the guests by towns along the road, at Balding, Roseburg, Coos Bay, Maryville and other points. In this city the plan is to have a grand banquet, with speeches by prominent citizens and state and municipal officers. It is in this making many persons that the completion of this line is to unite Oregon and the whole northwest with California is an event second only in importance to the driving of the last spike to the first overlaid line to this city, and an event that should be observed in a manner commensurate to its importance.”

A Sacramento dispatch of the 28th says: “The people of Sacramento are determined to celebrate the driving of the last spike on the California & Oregon Railroad, but here, has not yet been fully Askrich. Three plans are being discussed. One is to lay the corner stones of the exhibition building which it is to erected near the point where the spike will be driven. Another is to have a parade and speech-making, and at the same time have the capital city connected with the spikes driving station by telegraph, with an electric wire fastened to the spike and connected with the Sacramento fire alarm system, so that each blow of the pile is heard here. The other plan is for the celebration in Sacramento to be an excursion to the spot where the last spike is being set home.

December 9, 1887

The day set for the last spike ceremony was Saturday, Dec. 10 (on Monday), but unavoidable delay in track-laying made necessary a postponement to Tuesday of next week, Dec. 13th, and unless further postponement be necessary the event will occur on that day.

All citizens of Ashland are requested to illuminate their dwellings between the hours of 6 and 9 o’clock on the evening of the celebration. All who want to purchase Chinese lanterns for their own use in decoration can have them at wholesale cost by applying at once to Mr. Harry.

Arrangements will be made to ring all the bells in towns on each tap of the last spike as will be done in the chief cities of California and Oregon.

The end of the track is now about 3½ miles from Ashland, but there has been no program for two days past, owing to a slide north of this summit, and an accident to the construction train, which was ditched this side of the slide, and had not been replaced on the track last evening. It is probable that the date of celebration may have to be again postponed for a day or two.

A gentleman in from Linkville reports that no mail from this city was received since this week up to Wednesday. The trouble is that the Portland at Agar’s is about one-fourth mile from the depot, and the postmaster has been carrying and mailing up the mails without any compensation whatever, under this reform administration. He grew tired of this, and just quit. No one else had the authority to take his place, and the mails have been piling. Nothing like economy and silver service reform.

December 23, 1887

The driving of the golden spike which formally signalled to the world the completion of the railway enterprise just consummated by the pioneer railway builders of the Pacific Coast was accomplished last Saturday. It was a momentous day for Ashland, and our people, who pride themselves upon the sunny clime of Southern Oregon, were praying for a pleasant day, but the weather became, with a cold rain or stormy heat, refused to grant their supplications, and a miserable, cold, foggy, cloudy day dampened their spirits to some extent.

The train from Portland arrived here at 10:30. It consisted of the Pullman cars Rosenburg and Brigham, Henry Villard’s private O. & N. car, which has been four years in building, and a kitchen car.
The guests were welcomed here by the mayor and members of the city council of Ashland, and with music by the Ashland Cornet band, and most of them left the cars soon for a stroll about town. The train from the south, consisting of eight Pullman coaches and three baggage and dining cars, left San Francisco Friday afternoon, carrying the railroad representatives and their guests, and a number of other excursionists.

The train was due in Ashland at 3:30 P.M. and the ceremonies were to begin immediately upon its arrival, but delays at different points made it late at the summit, and the run from tunnel 14 to Ashland over the newly laid track was necessary so slow that it was nearly five o'clock when Ashland was reached.

The point of connection of the C. & O. and O. & C. tracks is about 500 yards south of the Ashland depot, and there the expectant crowd—numbering over 2000 people—had congregated before five o'clock, and on the damp ground, in the cool north breeze the waiting became physically unpleasant, but general good humor and a determination to wait till morning, if necessary, prevailed.

At about 4:30 the pilot engine rolled in, closely followed by the excursion train, and the sitting crowd rent the air with prolonged cheers of welcome. Darkness was gathering, but it was determined that the procession should be illuminated as the national procession, and the excursionists quickly disembarked and crowded about the point of interest. On a very small improvised platform a table was arranged for the speakers and these accommodations for the reporters. The table was on the opposite side of the track from the spot in which the driving of the spike was to be done, and in the hurry, Charles Crocker performed part of the ceremony amid considerable hubbub and informality. Mr. Crocker, taking the golden spike and silver hammer, which had been used on a similar occasion, spoke as follows:

"I hold in my hand the last spike. [Cries of "Hold it up!"

With this golden spike I propose now to unite the rule between California and Oregon, and I hope it will be the means of cementing the friendship of the two States and making them as one people. [Applause.] These two States are geographically and topographically united and I hope that the people of California and Oregon may always maintain their freedom, maintain their public schools, and maintain everything that conduces to their happiness and virtue."

The taps of his silver hammer, sent the electric current to fire the cannon, and ring the bells of the chief cities of the coast, and then the speaking began.

**FRANK M. PIXLEY**

The brilliant editor of the Argonaut, was called for and responded in a speech of which the following is but a partial report:

"...It is true, ladies and gentlemen, that we of California know less of you of Oregon, less of your social tastes, less of your political agitation, less of the matters of interest that concern you, than we know of any other state in the American Union. To-night we have united these great highways of travel, so that you people of this little country village of the mountains find yourselves from to-night henceforth and forever members of the great family of civilization, the great family of nations."

The excursionists were served with a banquet in their respective cars, and at six o'clock the Oregonians and Californians mingled in social union and exchanged greetings and mutual congratulations.

The City of Ashland had erected a handsome arch of welcome, spanning the chief avenue leading from the depot to the town. It was profusely decorated with evergreens, and bore in addition to the word "Welcome!" an emblem representing the joining of Oregon and California as two links of a solid chain. At dark the city was brilliantly illuminated and presented a handsome appearance.

At the passenger depot, G. F. Billings with his yelling corps of assistants had arranged a most attractive display of the products of Ashland and vicinity, including these fruits and big vegetables, Indian corn and the small grains, various mineral specimens and unique natural curios of various kind.

At Granite Hall the devotees of Terpsichore were afforded an opportunity for enjoyment in that line, and many of the visitors were attracted thither and participated.

A force of about a hundred Chinese will be needed all winter on the railroad between Ashland and Siskiyou, to gravel the road-bed, and keep the train in condition.

Seven tramps boarded the regular outgoing express at Portland for California at 4 o'clock Friday afternoon, but were discovered and put off at the carshops, two miles from the city. Two hours later the special train for the spike-driving ceremony stopped a few minutes at the shops. The tramps again crawled under the cars and settled themselves upon the brake-boards. The train started suddenly, throwing three of the men off. One was severely and probably fatally mangled. He said that his name was John Lynch, and that he came from Bridgeport, Conn. He had been drinking.

Two of the most expert telegraph operations in San Francisco were sent up with the last spike to express to the news of the proceedings and speeches to the Associated Press office in that city. They sent 15,441 words over the line between 6 a.m. and 3:30 a.m., and had some trouble too, with the wires.

The last trip of the stages on the line between Ashland and Siskiyou was made Friday, and the veteran driver, Dan Casely, who drove the first coach of the old line over the Siskiyou, claimed the honor of coming into Ashland with the last coach.

The first stage was run between Yreka and Jacksonville in 1 hour 30 minutes, and had some trouble too, with the wires.

The Railroad Arrives

With the introduction of the railroad in 1887, Ashland became a major division on the north south portion of the transcontinental railroad between Portland and San Francisco. This photo shows the recently reconstructed left side of the tracks, which had burned down in 1875 (SOHS 97496).
Below is an excerpt from Across the Plains: Adventures of a Party of Wisconsin Pioneers to Western Gold Fields, by William Earnshaw, who tells of his 1859 journey across the plains from Wisconsin to Jacksonville. The original spelling and punctuation have been copied verbatim as closely as possible.

We also rely on the kindness of strangers! The Kindness of Strangers

The most exciting part about volunteering at a museum is getting to work in collections storage. Volunteers are needed for projects that range from cataloging and digitizing photos to assisting visitors, answering research questions, performing data entry, and helping the SOHS attend to a long list of behind-the-scenes tasks. All training provided.

Research Library
541.552.1725
library@sohs.org
Assist visitors, answer research questions, perform data entry, digitize photos, and help SOHS attend to a long list of behind-the-scenes tasks. All training provided.

Hanley Farm
541.777.2675
hanleyfarm@sohs.org
Are you good at fixing things? Hanley Farm has countless odd jobs that require the assistance of people who are good with their hands. From carpentry to tree and bush pruning to equipment maintenance, the projects are too numerous to list.

Collections
541.777.6536, ext. 5501
help_us@sohs.org
The most exciting part about volunteering at a museum is getting to work in collections storage. Volunteers are needed for projects that range from cataloging and digitizing photos to assisting visitors, answering research questions, performing data entry, and helping the SOHS attend to a long list of behind-the-scenes tasks. All training provided.

Maintenance Coordinator
541.777.6536, ext. 1005
help_us@sohs.org
SOHS owns several vehicles that require standard auto maintenance and the occasional repair.

Auto Repair
541.777.6536, ext. 1005
help_us@sohs.org
SOHS owns several vehicles that require standard auto maintenance and the occasional repair.

Assistant Conversations Coordinator
541.777.6536, ext. 1005
help_us@sohs.org
SOHS owns several vehicles that require standard auto maintenance and the occasional repair.

The Kindness of Strangers

Next day we traveled down Bear Creek passing through a small village called Ashland. About noon we stopped near another small village called Garberville and camped right opposite a house on the outskirts of the village. We did not start a fire but my wife thought she would like some tea so I told her I would go to the house and get some hot water as we could see through the open door the woman was cooking dinner. I went to the house and asked her if she would let me have a little hot water? She asked me where we had come from. I told her we had crossed the plains and I thought we have got to come right into the house and take dinner with us.” I told her we could get along very well without dinner but she insisted upon us eating dinner with them. Here we found we were only seven miles from Jacksonville which was our destination. After dinner we started on and soon came to where the road branched and we took the wrong road. After we had gone about four miles we met a man with four horse team loaded with grain and I asked him if he were on the right road to Jacksonville? He said no, you ought to have taken the left hand road. I asked him which would be the best way to go from here. He told us to strike about the praise to a point of timber that he showed us where we could find the road. This man’s man was Chambers, being well acquainted with him afterwards. When we were crossing the prairie we met two men and stopped to talk with them. I could not imagine what nationality they were. They had a long-braid of hair down their back and seemed to be dressed queerly. They asked me which was the way to Jacksonville? They told, “keep sakes as far as possible the town and camp there.” I told my wife they were the queerest Dutchmen I ever saw. She said she did not believe they were Dutch but did not know what they were. I
The Heroism of Sarah Brotherton

In his diary, Applegate penned poems, drawings, and accounts of his interactions with soldiers, farmers, and Indians. One such poem was published in his diary, which appeared in an unknown newspaper on August 13, 1938. According to the diary, the poem recounting the “heroism of Sarah Brotherton during the Modoc insurrec-
tion” was still widely quoted at the time of Applegate’s death at ninety-three years old. The article continues, “Mr. Brotherton and an older son were caught in a field and, said the younger boy ran for home, and Mrs. Brotherton, with her husband’s rifle, went out to cover his retreat.” Below are excerpts from the poem. The original spelling and punctuation have been copied verbatim as closely as possible.

TALL ATHLETIC woman,
With long and streaming hair,
Going out against the redskin,
To save a fleeing son,
And with her strong hand grasping
Her husband’s trusty gun.

And there on guard we found them,
When four long days had fled.
Half creased and sleepless watching,
And sorrow for his dead.
And still that faithful mother,
When came, a saving hand,
Stood by the open doorway,
With the rifles in her hand.

February 26, 1861

AN RIOSEON, called in last night and stayed all night, I commenced to grab a potato patch. Been cool day slight snow storm. Wallace caught 41 Salmon yesterday, about six rockch the neighborhood commenced to gather in, after some desultory talk about the news of the day and new discoveries of Gold Mines the meeting was called to order by, Jacob Wag- nes, making a motion that David Stearnes be Chairman Joe Anderson seconded it, and it was carried, W Beeson Secretary, After a great deal of superfluous gos Mr Stearnes suggested a plan of a school house, 20 x 26 to be weathered boarded and planed and painted fic: . . .

March 4, 1866

I made a grindstone frame and then put out some more strawberries there are lots of squaws coming out I shall kill all I can, after noon I plowed finished plowing for corn, Wallace was out among the cattle found yet another cow down she had a little calf she brought the calf home but the cow will die which makes the fifth one, I am afraid the dream I had some time ago will come true, I dreamed then that seven head were dead there are now three dead and two down, Wallace will kill them tomorrow Been beautiful day, Lucinda Lose went passed, Indian Charly was with her.

This is the day that Abraham Lincoln takes his seat in the White House. The Southern fanatics have threatened to prevent him but I guess when it comes to the point they will think better of it. Gen. Scott says he shall be inaugurated to day, I think the Union will be Saved yet awhile

A farmer, Welborn Beeson (July 22, 1838–April 29, 1893) was born in Vermilionville, Illinois, to prominent pioneers John and Ann Beeson. The Beesons, who had originally immigrated from England, crossed the plains to Oregon in 1853, settling along Wagner Creek.

Welborn kept a daily diary from his fifteenth birthday until his death of apoplexy at the age of fifty-six. His diaries provide a unique glimpse into rural southern Oregon during that era, covering significant historical topics such as the pioneer era, the treatment of Indians, early settlement, gold mining, the Civil War, the arrival of the railroad, and the orchard boom.

During the Civil War, Welborn served as a second lieutenant in the Mountain Rangers. In 1866, he married Mary Catherine Brophy, with whom he had eight children.

His father was rumored to have provided a safe house for slaves on the Underground Railroad. Author of A Plea for Indians, John Beeson spent twenty years agitating for Indian rights. He was one of the leaders of the movement to save the Modoc, who promised to work on the Indian situation when the war ended. A date was set for a future meeting—ten days after Lincoln’s assassination.

APRIL 28, 1865

Beautiful day Mother and I got ready to ride down to Rockefell-
low to Mr Walker called, Mother rode Jane I rode Jessie on a
borrowed saddle Wallace rode to meeting on Betty We had a
very pleasant visit at Rockefelles, Wagner and wife came
over, and Thornton and wife called we staid all day, the first
time Mother ever rode Jane and she was a little afraid but
she is perfectly gentle, Nessa has come by pony Express that
the South Carolinas have fired into and blown up Ft Sumter
and killed four men, May Anderson wounded and they let go
to Washington, So War has really commenced and we have
no union no government and no Nation! alas! alas! that such
should be the case, It is all right evidently by a few fanatics
in both sides of the country. The fanatics of the south wishing
to propagate and extend slavery all over the union and the
fanatics of the North wishing to abolish slavery where it
now exists, both were wrong had they both been satisfied
at to let Slavery alone it would peaceably died out of its own
accord and we would have been a permanent and firm Nation
the leaders of the World, Now we are broken and split up the
country, The Fathers of the revolutions fought and died
to save is no longer cure we are the by-word and shamefast
of other nations, but now blood is split it is no time to bewail
but to work if fight we must fight we will, until we conquer or
die, and either preserve the union or never have peace

May 23, 1865

Wallace helped me to box potatoes until noon, I helped
them haul the shingles on the roof after noon, It is raining
quite hard makes everything look fine, I helped nail on some
shingles for the first time, I can do it pretty well, War and
rumors of War are in the fresh papers, Jef Davis of Missipi
she is perfectly gentle, News has come by pony Express that
Mother ever rode Jane and she was a little afraid but
over, and Thornton and wife called we staid all day, the first
very pleasant visit at Rockefellows, Wagner and wife came
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Mary Catherine (aka Brophy) and Welborn Beeson (DONORS) Welborn Beeson Mary excerpts courtesy of the Trask Historical Society (oral history by Bob
Coxmund and Joe Wright)
— J

generously supporting SOHS.

this remarkable valley. I hope you join me, lasting. We all need to share in preserving
give to SOHS because I want these stories to
living today.

butter turns to cream and they pan for
I've seen kids' eyes light up as their churned
© David Gibb Photography

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Dr. Robert & Joanne Wilcox

My wife is a fifth-generation Jacksonville native whose teen summer employment was with SOHS. Her deep and broad family connections to this area inspire me.

Knowledge of local history enhances our sense of our culture and awareness of our community, helping us move into the future critically and progressively.

— JIM LEWIS, Board of Trustees

I grew up in Jacksonville and witnessed its rebirth after its designation as a National Historic Landmark. I have sought out and treasures of our past give perspectives and direction for the future. We want to preserve our heritage is vital to our tourist industry. And there is nothing more enter-taining to me than the stories of the past.

Working with SOHS is exactly the activity I hoped. I look forward to any job there is to be done. Working with the collection has been like returning to my years growing up. I feel them with me now, looking over my shoulder.

— JAYLE LEWIS, Volunteer

I've seen kids' eyes light up as their churned butter turns to cream and they pan for gold during the Hanley Farm summer camp. Adults are thrilled to find information in our library files on long-relatives. Southern Oregon Historical Society makes this happen, and much more. Working with the collection has been like returning to my years growing up. I feel them with me now, looking over my shoulder. I have dedicated my life to this community.

— JIM LEWIS, Board of Trustees

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